

ABSTRACT

CLEANING CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

5 Oil contaminated drill cuttings are contacted with an oil soluble surfactant with
agitation which causes the hydrophobic moiety of the surfactant to interact
with the oil. Next, an aqueous polymer formulation comprising a polymer
having polar and/or ionic functionality is added and mixed. Then, an excess
volume of water is added with gentle agitation and the mixture is allowed to
10 settle, whereupon the cuttings sediment to the bottom of the receptacle in
which the process is undertaken and the supernatant contains a colloidal
suspension of particles which comprise oil, surfactant and polymer. The drill
cuttings may then be separated from the supernatant by filtration. The
supernatant may be treated with a flocculating agent to cause the colloidal
15 particles to sediment. They too may then be separated.